

Amesbury Rural District Council.

Report of the Medical Officer of Health for 1899.

GENTLEMEN,

It is once more my duty to present to you my Annual Report on the health and sanitary condition of the Union.

During the year 1899, the births of 177 children were registered, viz., 91 males, and 86 females, and during the same period, 99 deaths were recorded, 57 males, and 42 females, showing a natural increase of 78, but as three of these deaths were soldiers of Bulford Camp, it would leave a natural increase of 81 to the Union.

The birth-rate per 1,000 of the population (estimated by the census of 1891 to be 6,889) is 25·69, as against 20·76 for the year 1898. The death-rate is 14·37 as against 12·48 for the same period.

The death-rate in the three divisions of the Union, in the several quarters of the year, will be found compared with the rates in the corresponding quarters of the preceding year, in the adjoining table.

	AMESBURY. Population, 3,355.		ORCHESTON. Population, 1,888.		WINTERBOURNE. Population, 1,646.	
	1898.	1899.	1898.	1899.	1898.	1899.
1st ...	4·17	5·06	4·23	7·41	3·64	3·03
2nd ...	4·76	2·08	3·71	1·05	2·43	1·21
3rd ...	3·27	4·14	1·05	3·70	1·21	1·21
4th ...	2·38	3·87	3·17	2·64	1·21	6·68
	14·58	15·15	12·16	14·80	8·49	12·13

Of the 92 deaths registered, twenty were 60 and under 70 years of age, twenty-six over 70 and under 80, sixteen 80 and upwards, and of these one reached the great age of 100 years. There were 13 deaths of infants under one year of age, making the infant mortality 73·44 per 1000 births registered.

From the principal Zymotic diseases five deaths are to be attributed, two from diphtheria, two from whooping-cough, and one from membranous croup, from rheumatic fever one, from phthisis one, from bronchitis and pneumonia 4, from heart disease 30, from injuries two.

Forty cases of infectious diseases have been notified during the year. Scarlet-fever, being the most prevalent during the last quarter, in the parish of Woodford, infecting 15 cottages. It was, I believe, imported primary from Salisbury. The first case occurred in Lower Woodford, where it was not recognised as an infectious disease, and no medical aid sought for. The child was found to be running about the village, and attending the Parish School, in the peeling stage of the disorder. Fortunately the cases were of a mild type, and no deaths occurred. The School was closed until after the Xmas holidays, and was white-washed and disinfected. Disinfection was carried out in the infected cottages where practicable.



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Five cases of diphtheria were notified, two at Wilbury Park Farm, one at the Park Lodge Gate, one at Durrington, one at Woodford, all of sporadic origin. Owing to the cottage at Wilbury Park, in which the two first cases occurred, being situated close to the dairy, the father of the infected children being the dairyman, I deemed it necessary to put this dairy farm in quarantine for 12 days. The disease did not spread beyond its first incidence. There was one case of continued fever in the parish of Orcheston St. Mary, imported from London, but the disease did not spread. I may here add, I have received no notification of infectious diseases since the 25th January, 1900.

During the year in company with Mr. Huxham, I have visited every Village in the Union, and have inspected the various slaughter-houses, bake-houses and dairies, and 413 cottages, many of which were unfit for habitation, and over-crowded, notably in the parish of Amesbury, a special report of which I laid before your Board on May 17th. Legal proceedings were taken against the tenants of two of the most insanitary and overcrowded of these cottages, and they were given six months to turn out. The Agent of the Landlord admitted they were unfit for habitation. Whether this was a satisfactory solution of the question, I must leave. I have since been advised that Sir E. Antrobus' Agent will remedy these defects, as soon as he can get possession of the cottages. With respect to the state of the cottages in Tilshead and their sanitary surroundings, notices have been served on the Landlords, who have promised, during the coming spring, to enlarge the accommodation of the cottages complained of.

The pail system for privies in this village, is being very generally adopted. I may here add, that a general and decided improvement is steadily going on in many of the parishes in this Union.

I have received complaints of the water supply, as to 20 cottages in the parish of Bulford. Owing to the wells being dirty, the tenants are obliged to obtain their water for domestic purposes from the river. These complaints have been brought before the Authorities acting for the War Office on several occasions, with little success, as I understand the War Office Department does not admit any liability to act on notices received from Local Sanitary Authorities, but in an interview with Colonel Barklie at Durrington on Friday, February 23rd, I drew his attention to this matter, and he has promised he will take immediate steps to remedy the defects complained of.

I have, during the year, analysed 26 samples of water, all were good and fit for domestic use. The water supply for the Union is plentiful and good.

The Streams and water-courses are all clean and well cared for. Vaccination, under the New Act, in this Union is fairly well carried out.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

CHARLES EDDOWES.

Maddington, February 26th, 1900.

